

THE ROSE OF SHARON.

(Cant ii. 1 ; Isaiah xxxv. 1.)

THE question of the proper translation of the word *Habatstseleth*, rendered "rose" in the English version, has never been settled with certainty. The following notes may be of interest regarding it:—

The word in Hebrew comes from the root *Batzl*, "bulbous," from which it has been generally concluded that some kind of lily was intended, and a great many species have been proposed.

The Targums translate the word by *Narkus*, the narcissus, which is not only of the lily tribe, but also a plant very common in spring in the Plain of Sharon.

Roses are not found in Palestine, though the dog-rose flourishes on Hermon in the cooler atmosphere 6,000 feet above the sea and in the Anti-Lebanon. It seems improbable that the climate of the lower regions can ever have been fitted for roses.

We found that the name *Buseil* was applied to one plant only in Palestine, and that plant is the narcissus. This is confirmed by M. Bergheim of Abu Shusheh, whose acquaintance with the peasant language is intimate.

The agreement between the modern name and the Jewish tradition of the meaning of the word used in the Bible seems perhaps sufficient to identify the rose of Sharon with the beautiful white narcissus which covers the low hills in spring and is also found on the plain.

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